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09/903,239	07/11/2001	Delbert Raymond Cecchi	ROC920010130US1	9489

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, LONG T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2816

DATE MAILED: 08/28/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/903,239

Applicant(s)

CECCHI ET AL.

Examiner

Long Nguyen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 July 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 11 July 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2. 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to because of the following: in Figure 1, "ELEMENTS" in both boxes 110 and 120 should be changed to --ELEMENT-- so that it is consistent with the specification (page 3, lines 10-20).

Claim Objections

2. Claims 2, 3 and 7 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In claim 2, the recitation "a first voltage" on line 3 should be changed to --the first voltage-- because "a first voltage" has already been recited in independent claim 1. Similarly, the recitation "a second voltage" on line 7, the recitation "a first input signal" on line 21 and "a second input signal" should be changed to --the second voltage--, --the first input signal--, and --the second input signal--, respectively. Further, the first occurrence of "and" on line 23 is grammatically incorrect and should be deleted. Also, the letters "e" to "k" in this claim should be changed to --d-- to --j-- so that they are in consecutive order.

In claim 3, the recitation "an output signal" on line 4 should be changed to --the output signal-- because "an output signal" has already been recited in independent claim 1. Also, "signal;" on the last line of claim 3 should be changed to --signal.-- because a claim must end with a period.

In claim 7, line 7, --a-- should be inserted before "second voltage".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

With respect to claim 3, the phrase “the first drain” on line 2 lacks antecedent basis because the claim contains no earlier recitation of a first drain, and it is unclear as to what element the limitation is making reference. Also, the phrases “the second drain” on line 3, “the third drain” on line 4 and “the fourth drain” on line 5 of the claim lack antecedent basis for the similar problem. It is suggested to make claim 3 depends on claim 2, e.g. changes “1” on the first line of claim 3 to --2--, to overcome the lack antecedent basis problem.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhang (USP 6,313,696) in view of Sasaki (USP 5,039,873).

With respect to claim 1, Figure 2 of the Zhang reference discloses a differential amplifier which includes: an active differential amplification circuit (transistors 31, 34, 41-46, 38, and 35 in Figure 2) electrically coupled to a first input signal (ina), a second input signal (inb) and an

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output signal (out), the active differential amplification circuit (transistors 31, 34, 41-46, 38, and 35) also electrically coupled to a first voltage (Vdd) and a second voltage (GND) different from the first voltage (Vdd); and a bias circuit (transistors 32, 33, 36 and 37 in Figure 2) electrically coupled to the active differential amplification circuit (transistors 31, 34, 41-46, 38, and 35) for biasing the active differential amplification circuit (transistors 31, 34, 41-46, 38, and 35). The Zhang reference does not teach that the bias circuit (transistors 32, 33, 36 and 37) is a passive circuit. However, the Sasaki reference teaches that when a transistor is on, it is functionally equivalent to a resistor (see Figure 4c, and Col. 1, lines 21-22). Therefore, because each of the gates of the transistors 32, 33, 36 and 37 of the bias circuit in Figure 2 of the Zhang reference is connected to a respective fixed power supply voltage (Vdd or Gnd) so transistors 32, 33, 36 and 37 will remain on during switching (Col. 7, lines 37-41), it would have been obvious to one having an ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute a resistor for each of the transistors 32, 33, 36 and 37 in Figure 2 of the Zhang reference because they are functionally equivalent. With such a modification, the bias circuit will be a passive bias circuit which includes four resistors. Note that this modification will also meet the functional language “for providing common-mode rejection while providing differential-mode amplification” on lines 1-2 and “the active differential ... the second input signal” on the last 4 lines of the claim because the structure of the modification is the same as the structure of the claimed invention (Figure 2).

With respect to claim 2, the above modification shows that the active differential amplification circuit (transistors 31, 34, 41-46, 38, and 35 in Figure 2 of Zhang) includes: a first transistor (34) having a first source electrically coupled to the first voltage (Vdd), a first gate

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electrically coupled to a first node (58) and a first drain (connected to node 52), the first node (58) being a bias node; a second transistor (31) having a second drain (connected to node 50), a second gate electrically coupled to the first node (58) and a second source electrically coupled to the second voltage (GND) different from the first voltage (Vdd); a third transistor (38) having a third source electrically coupled to the first voltage (Vdd), a third drain (connected to node of 56) and a third gate electrically coupled to the first node (58); a fourth transistor (35) having a fourth drain (connected to node 54), a fourth gate electrically coupled to the first node (58) and a fourth source electrically coupled to the second voltage (GND); a fifth transistor (41) having a fifth source electrically coupled to the first voltage (Vdd), a fifth drain electrically coupled to a second node (the junction of transistors 41-43) and a fifth gate electrically coupled to the first node (58); a sixth transistor (44) having a sixth drain electrically coupled to a third node (junction of transistors 44-46), a sixth gate electrically coupled to the first node (58) and a sixth source electrically coupled to the second voltage (GND); a seventh transistor (42) having a seventh source electrically coupled to the second node (junction of transistors 41-43), a seventh drain electrically coupled to the second drain (the connection of transistors 42 and 31 at node 50), and a seventh gate electrically coupled to the first input signal (ina); an eighth transistor (45) having an eighth drain electrically coupled to the first drain (the connection of transistors 45 and 34 at node 52), an eighth source electrically coupled to the third node (junction of transistors 44-46) and an eighth gate electrically coupled to the first input signal (ina); a ninth transistor (43) having a ninth source electrically coupled to the second node (junction of transistors 41-43), a ninth gate electrically coupled to the second input signal (inb) and a ninth drain electrically coupled to the fourth drain (the connection of transistors 43 and 35 at node 54); and a tenth transistor (46)

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having a tenth drain electrically coupled to the third drain (the connection of transistors 46 and 38 at node 56), a tenth gate electrically coupled to the second input signal (inb) and a tenth source electrically coupled to the third node (junction of transistors 45-46).

With respect to claim 3, the above modification also meet the limitation that the passive bias circuit includes: a first resistor (substituted for transistor 33 as discussed above with regard to claim 1) electrically coupling the first drain (node 52) to the first node (58); a second resistor (substituted for transistor 32 as discussed above with regard to claim 1) electrically coupling the second drain (node 50) to the first node (58); a third resistor (substituted for transistor 37 as discussed above with regard to claim 1) electrically coupling the third drain (node 56) to the output signal (out); and a fourth resistor (substituted for transistor 36 as discussed above with regard to claim 1) electrically coupling the fourth drain (node 54) to the output signal (out).

With respect to claim 4, Figure 2 of the Zhang reference shows that the first transistor (34), the third transistor (38), the fifth transistor (41), the seventh transistor (42) and the ninth transistor (43) each include a p-channel device.

With respect to claim 5, Figure 2 of the Zhang reference shows that the second transistor (31), the fourth transistor (35), the sixth transistor (44), the eighth transistor (45) and the tenth transistor (46) each include an n-channel device.

With respect to claim 6, Figure 2 of the Zhang reference shows that second voltage (GND) is electrically coupled to a common ground (GND).

With respect to claim 7, the above modification of Figure 2 of the Zhang reference as discussed in claim 1 also meets all of the limitations of claim 7 because the structure of this modification is the same as the structure of the claimed invention (Figure 2), e.g., the above

modification is a differential amplifier which includes: a first transistor (34) having a first source electrically coupled to the first voltage (Vdd), a first gate electrically coupled to a first node (58) and a first drain (connected to node 52), the first node (58) being a bias node; a second transistor (31) having a second drain (connected to node 50), a second gate electrically coupled to the first node (58) and a second source electrically coupled to a second voltage (GND) different from the first voltage (Vdd); a first resistor (substituted for transistor 33 as discussed above with regard to claim 1) electrically coupling the first drain (node 52) to the first node (58); a second resistor (substituted for transistor 32 as discussed above with regard to claim 1) electrically coupling the second drain (node 50) to the first node (58); a third transistor (38) having a third source electrically coupled to the first voltage (Vdd), a third drain (connected to node of 56) and a third gate electrically coupled to the first node (58); a fourth transistor (35) having a fourth drain (connected to node 54), a fourth gate electrically coupled to the first node (58) and a fourth source electrically coupled to the second voltage (GND); a third resistor (substituted for transistor 37 as discussed above with regard to claim 1) electrically coupling the third drain (node 56) to an output signal (out); and a fourth resistor (substituted for transistor 36 as discussed above with regard to claim 1) electrically coupling the fourth drain (node 54) to the output signal (out); a fifth transistor (41) having a fifth source electrically coupled to the first voltage (Vdd), a fifth drain electrically coupled to a second node (the junction of transistors 41-43) and a fifth gate electrically coupled to the first node (58); a sixth transistor (44) having a sixth drain electrically coupled to a third node (junction of transistors 44-46), a sixth gate electrically coupled to the first node (58) and a sixth source electrically coupled to the second voltage (GND); a seventh transistor (42) having a seventh source electrically coupled to the second node

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(junction of transistors 41-43), a seventh drain electrically coupled to the second drain (the connection of transistors 42 and 31 at node 50), and a seventh gate electrically coupled to a first input signal (ina); an eighth transistor (45) having an eighth drain electrically coupled to the first drain (the connection of transistors 45 and 34 at node 52), an eighth source electrically coupled to the third node (junction of transistors 44-46) and an eighth gate electrically coupled to the first input signal (ina); a ninth transistor (43) having a ninth source electrically coupled to the second node (junction of transistors 41-43), a ninth gate electrically coupled to a second input signal (inb) and a ninth drain electrically coupled to the fourth drain (the connection of transistors 43 and 35 at node 54); and a tenth transistor (46) having a tenth drain electrically coupled to the third drain (the connection of transistors 46 and 38 at node 56), a tenth gate electrically coupled to the second input signal (inb) and a tenth source electrically coupled to the third node (junction of transistors 45-46). Note that the preamble recitation “for providing common-mode rejection while providing differential-mode amplification” on lines 1-2 is merely intended use.

With respect to claim 8, Figure 2 of the Zhang reference shows that the first transistor (34), the third transistor (38), the fifth transistor (41), the seventh transistor (42) and the ninth transistor (43) each include a p-channel device.

With respect to claim 9, Figure 2 of the Zhang reference shows that the second transistor (31), the fourth transistor (35), the sixth transistor (44), the eighth transistor (45) and the tenth transistor (46) each include an n-channel device.

With respect to claim 10, Figure 2 of the Zhang reference shows that second voltage (GND) is electrically coupled to a common ground (GND).

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Conclusion

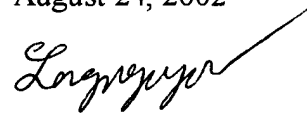
7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directly to Examiner Long Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 308-6063. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tim Callahan, can be reached at (703) 308-4876. The fax number for this group is (703) 872-9318. The After Final fax number is (703) 872-9319.

Any inquiry of general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

August 24, 2002



Long Nguyen
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